CLOTHING THERAPY: HEALING STRESS, ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION THROUGH COLOURS OF CLOTHING

Synopsis

Submitted in the partial fulfilment for the requirement of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In

HOME SCIENCE

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Dayalbagh, Agra, 282005

2022

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1.INTRODUCTION

Good health is essential for a society's growth, development and productivity and also for an individual's happy life. Health is a state of physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, (WHO, 2018).

Mental health plays a crucial role in determining the overall well being of an individual. It allows an individual to realise their full potential, cope up with stresses of life and work productively.

WHO (2018), defines mental health as, "a state of well being in which every individual recognises his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can function productively and fruitfully, and can contribute to his/her community."According to WHO(2018), the level of mental health of a person can be determined by a number of social , psychological and biological factors.

In the present times when the whole world is suffering due to the COVID-19 outbreak , several reports suggest that there is a significant rise in the percentage of people suffering from stress, anxiety and depression. Stress, anxiety and depression are considered the most common mental health conditions.

1.1 STRESS

American Psychological Association(2021) defines stress as a normal reaction to pressure faced in day to day life. It can affect how an individual behaves or feels which has a direct influence on physiological and psychological health.

Stress are of two types-

(1)Acute stress- this type of stress is a short term stress and it may or may not have much negative impact on an individual.

(2)Chronic stress- this type of stress is for a longer period of time that doesn't go away quickly . It has a lot of negative impact on an individual and leads to major health issues.

Sources of stress may include-

(1)Routine stress caused by day to day life activities.

(2)Stress due to some sudden negative event or change in life.

(3)Stress due to some major traumatic event in life.

1.2 ANXIETY

American Psychological Association(2021) describes anxiety as an emotion felt by an individual due to tension or worrying thoughts. When anxiety lasts for a long period of time it leads to anxiety disorders which may pose serious health issues.

Anxiety disorders are of several types such as-

(1)Generalised anxiety disorder - when an individual excessively worries about ordinary things everyday or for at least 6 months.

(2)Panic attacks - this is a condition when an individual experiences sudden, repeated periods of intense fear with no danger. These last for several minutes.

(3)Phobias- this is a condition which an individual experiences due to things that may not actually be dangerous.

Some of the most common symptoms for all types of anxiety disorders may include

(1)anxious thoughts and restless

(2)pounding heartbeat

(3)avoiding everyday activities

(4)change in behaviour

(5)irritability

(6)difficulty controlling feelings of worry

Anxiety can be experienced by anyone regardless of their age and sex. Individuals who are at a high risk of experiencing anxiety include people

(1)Who have experienced some traumatic or stressful event at some point of time in their lives.

(2)Who are shy or have difficulty in facing new people or situations.

(3)Who work in a stressful working environment.

(4)Who have a family history of mental illness.

1.3 DEPRESSION

American Psychological Association(2021) describes depression as a state where an individual experiences constant sadness, lack of interest, insomnia or excessive sleeping, feelings of guilt, worthlessness or thoughts of death or suicide.

Depression have different forms such as-

(1)Persistent depression- in this a person experiences depression with less serious symptoms and lasts for at least 2 years.

(2)Major depression - in this a person may experience depression most of the times for at least 2 weeks that may affect day to day activities.

(3)Psychosis depression- in this a person may become delusional or may experience hallucinations. This is a serious threat to both physical and mental health.

Some of the most common symptoms include

- Irritable mood
- Lack of interest in everyday activities
- Too slow or too fast movement
- Feeling hopeless
- Over eating
- Suicidal thoughts
- Self hate
- Feeling worthless

Mental health conditions can be treated through medication, therapies and counselling. Yun (2010) stated, to decrease the side effects of the medicines for treatment of mental health , various expressive art therapies are developed that are also being actively used by counsellors and psychiatrists.

Horn & Gurel (1981), recognised that appropriate clothing and certain components of clothing like colours, materials, and forms of the clothing can help in mitigating depressive emotions of hospitalised patients. Concluding from these studies it can be said that clothing plays a significant role in affecting the psychological state of a person, be it moods, behaviour, or emotions.

1.4 MENTAL HEALTH SCENARIO IN INDIA

Gururaj et.al.(2016) stated that according to the National Health Survey Reports, in the year 2016,the percentage of mental health disorders prevalent in India was 10.6%. As per the National Crime Records Bureau(2019), 139,123 Indians committed suicide and the national suicide rate was 10.4 (calculated per lakh of population). The problems of stress, anxiety and depression have long prevailed

significantly affecting the mental health of a large percentage of the global population. The government of India has launched various programs to address mental health problems but progress to improve the conditions seems slow. A large percentage of people suffering from mental health problems face adverse consequences of the poor quality of care as they can't afford expensive and high quality health care services,(Patel et.al,2007).

1.5 CLOTHING : ORIGIN AND HISTORY

Clothes mean the items worn on the body in order to cover it, protect it , or adorn it. The type of clothes worn depends upon aspects such as gender, body type, religion, and demography.

The origin of clothing is not certain but various archeologists and experts estimate it to be ranging from 40,000 to 3 million years ago. The various views related to the origin of clothing include the northward migration of modern homo sapiens away from the warm climatic conditions of Africa, another view suggests that the loss of human body hair must have necessitated the invention of clothes. It has also been suggested that the earliest forms of clothing may have been made of animal hair and fur, and vegetation including barks, leaves and grasses that were simply tied around the body. In Paleolithic and Mesolithic times (about 10,000 to 5,000 BC) there is evidence of thread and cord made from grasses, reeds, or animal sinews being used to bind or fasten tools or weapons together. The discovery of bone awls and needles indicates that leather was sewn to form protective garments or containers.

Clothes have now become the basic essence and necessity of most of the fully evolving and civilised human societies , and has also become an integral part of the human identity. A number of motives have been attributed to the adoption of clothing from ancient times, such as decoration, modesty and protection. There have been four principle theories of origin of clothing.

• The **first theory is of modesty**, that is, clothes were worn to cover nakedness and because of shame.

• The second theory to explain the origin of clothes is the opposite of the first theory; it has been called the **immodesty theory.** This theory explains that clothes were used to cover body parts to sexually lure or attract.

• A third theory states that man,in **order to protect** himself from the environment, wore clothes. Some believe that clothing was worn as protection against enemies or against harm from supernatural forces.

• The fourth and final theory explains that clothes were adopted as a means of **aesthetic expression**. This theory has been called the decoration or the ornamentation theory.

1.6 CLOTHING PSYCHOLOGY

Barnard (2002), stated that clothing has both subjective and objective meanings. An individual's experiences, communication and understanding are linked to clothing.

Galinsky (2012), coined the term 'Enclothed Cognition' which suggests that clothes have a systemic influence on the wearer's psychological processes and abilities.

1.7 COLOUR PSYCHOLOGY

Colours affect all human thoughts , feelings and behaviour as they are the first component that an individual notices and responds to while looking at a certain object specially clothing, Birren(1968)

The colour psychology is based on the impact that specific colours have emotionally and mentally on an individual.

There are universal psychological effects of colour and each hue affects distinct psychological modes and personality types influence the response to colour schemes. Li & Shi (2014) stated that colours stimulate visual perceptions in people which impacts their psychological reactions, moods, emotions, and behaviours and this is termed as colour psychology. Colour therapy can help cure physical and psychological diseases by applying appropriate colours to stimulate responses.

The warm colours evoke emotions such as warmth and comfort but can also evoke anger and irritation.

The cool colours evoke emotions of calmness and peace but can also evoke sadness and emptiness.

Each colour has a positive as well as a negative impact on the psyche of an individual and the correct use of each colour can help in coping with the common psychological problems such as stress, anxiety and depression.

The characteristics of each colour which determines its impact on an individual's psyche include-

(1)Hue- It is the composition of the colour.

(2)Value- It is the lightness and darkness of colour.

(3)Intensity- It is the brightness and dullness of colour.

(4)Temperature- It determines whether the colour is warm or cool.

2. NEED OF THE STUDY

(1)Mental health is a cause of major concern globally and in India too.The increasing suicide rate in India due to mental distress is higher than the global average and despite of the various programs launched by the government to address this problem there is no significant progress. (Srivastava, 2016).

(2)Psychotherapy helps in understanding the psychological traits and life problems or events that are the cause or that contribute to the conditions of people suffering from mental health problems and helps with the coping techniques, (Casarella, 2020).

(3)During review of related literature the researcher found that the colours of clothing can have a significant effect on the psyche of an individual.

(4)Therapies like ‘art therapy’, ‘music therapy’, and ‘dance therapy’ etc. are used to treat psychological and physical health.

(5)Although several work has been done on the connection between colours and emotions, there is very little work available related to coping with stress, anxiety and depression through colours of clothing.

(6)In the Indian scenario the activities conducted using colours are centered around healing physical ailments and using conventional therapies. Hence, an intervention using colour of clothing to cope up with psychological problems like stress, anxiety and depression will be of great help in improving the psychological health of people.

3. JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

(1)Mental health conditions can have a substantial effect on all areas of life and the most common mental health conditions are stress, anxiety and depression.

(2)The National Mental Health Survey (2015-16) reveals that nearly 15% of Indians are in need of active interventions for one or more mental health issues.

(3)Hence the researcher intends to design and implement an intervention programme to assess the effect of colour of clothing on stress, anxiety and depression.

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The proposed statement of the problem is -

"Effect of colour of clothing on stress, anxiety and depression."

5.OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

(1)Stress - American Psychological Association(2021) defines stress as a normal reaction to pressure faced in day to day life.

(2)Anxiety - American Psychological Association(2021) describes anxiety as an emotion felt by an individual due to tension or worrying thoughts.

(3)Depression - American Psychological Association(2021) describes depression as a state where an individual experiences constant sadness, lack of interest, insomnia or excessive sleeping, feelings of guilt, worthlessness or thoughts of death or suicide.

(4)Intervention - A situation in which someone becomes involved in a particular issue, problem etc in order to influence what happens.

6. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

(1)To assess the baseline level of stress, anxiety and depression among selected sample.

(2)To develop the informative material on the basis of the understanding of the role of colours in coping up with stress, anxiety and depression.

(3)To create awareness among sample regarding the role of colours in relieving stress, anxiety and depression.

(4)To plan and recommend personalised set of colours for each participant of experimental group as per their level of stress, anxiety and depression.

(5)To assess the effect of intervention on the level of stress, anxiety and depression of experimental group.

(6)To obtain the feedback regarding the intervention given and follow up the usage of colours by the sample as per their need.

(7)To disseminate the information for a larger population.

7. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Table1. Review of Literature

Reviews Related to Mental Health			
Year	Researcher	Title	Findings
2020	Verma	Depression, anxiety, and stress and socio-demographic correlates among general Indian public during COVID-19	The study conducted on 354 subjects to find the prevalence of stress,anxiety,and depression during COVID-19 lockdown revealed that there is an urgent need to address the mental health conditions as stress,anxiety and depression were negative significantly prevalent among Indian population during the COVID-19 lockdown.
2015	Rao	Depression, anxiety and stress levels in industrial workers.	A study was conducted on 90 workers of an industry to measure the levels of stress, anxiety, and depression through DASS-21. The results of the study revealed that 18-36% of the workers suffered from mental distress.
Reviews related to Clothing Psychology			
Year	Researcher	Title	Findings
2012	Baumgartner	You Are What You Wear: What Your Clothes Say About You	The book explains that clothing says a lot about human psyche: moods, emotions , self concept and is a physical representation of internal perceptions. A change in the wardrobe can bring about a significant change in moods. The book also explains how choice of clothes can affect work life.
2012	Galinsky	Enclothed Cognition	The experiment tested that by wearing the clothes associated with three traits - attentiveness , determination, and creativity, there would ultimately be an acquisition of these traits. These researches divided the participants into two groups , where half of them symbolic clothing, and the other half wore informal clothing .The findings disclosed that the participants in symbolic clothing (attentiveness , determination , and

			creativity) significantly outperformed their opponents in their respective areas. The results of the experiment concluded that a temporary shift in the identity can be easily prompted by a change in clothing. Clothes can change the psychological state of the wearer.
2010	Moody	An exploratory study, Relationships between trying on clothing, mood, emotion, personality and clothing preferences.	The study stated that Clothing has multi- sensory aspects which contribute in impacting the moods of the wearer either positively or negatively.
2004	Piacentini	Symbolic Consumption in Teenagers' Clothing Choices	It was found that youngsters use clothing as a means of self expression as their clothing is linked to their self-concept.
Reviews Related to Colour Psychology			
2018	Hussain	Healing And Therapy With Colours	Research concluded that 'Colours' have intense effect on mood, behaviour, action, metabolism and hence on overall health. The healing through colours is high vibration healing with just energy(colour). Colours maintain balance between physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual state of human beings thereby leading to cure disorders and diseases.
2017	Sabita	A Study on the Psychosocial Dimensions of Clothing Behaviour and its Impact on Health	The study conducted on 300 subjects to study the relationship between clothing and various psychological factors concluded that more than 40% of subjects believed that proper clothing can help increasing the self-confidence and specific colours can enhance the personality. Also more than 45% respondents agreed that psychological harms faced by wearer can be protected through appropriate selection of clothing.
2010	Carruthers	The Manchester Colour Wheel: Development of a novel way of identifying colour choice and its	An experiment was conducted wherein the aim was to assess eight colours. The result revealed that-

		validation in healthy ,anxious, and depressed individuals.	1. Yellow was most 'drawn to' colour and was associated with normal mood. 2.Grey was associated with anxious and depressed mood. 3.Different shades of same colour had completely different positive and negative connotations. The experiment concluded that the colour wheel can be used in clinical conditions to assess the status of health, moods and emotions.
2008	Chambala	Anxiety and Art Therapy: Treatment In The Public Eye	Patients of depression and anxiety were asked to draw and paint their anxieties. The result showed that each patient used different colours and colour combinations to express their anxiety. Some patients stated that each colour represented a different emotion of their anxiety. Some stated that colours represented all the thoughts running through their minds.
2007	Honig	Physiological and Psychological Response To Coloured Light	An experiment consisting of 5 minutes sessions of no colour exposure, then again 10 minutes session of red colour exposure, then again a 5 minutes session of no colour exposure, and finally a 10 minutes session of blue colour exposure was conducted on 20 participants. This was done to measure correlation between colours and psychophysiological response. The results of the experiment concluded that exposure to red colour significantly increases anxiety while exposure to blue colour significantly decreases the levels of anxiety.
2006	Birren	Colour Psychology and Colour Therapy	Research concluded that weaker contrast and saturation convey calmness and stronger contrast and saturation convey activeness. Also, warm colours increase arousal more than cool colours.
1993	Moorjani	The Telling Tales of Colours colour choice and	Colours and colour preferences have a very significant impact on

		You	humans and most of the people are unaware of this impact or often fail to understand it. Colours can play a major role in shaping an individual's personality, bringing changes in an individual's perspective and in betterment of handling problems in life.
1980	Wright	The Wright Theory	The theory suggests a number of things such as- (A)There are four 'psychological primaries' which have specific effects on specific parts of the human psyche. Red colour affects 'lower order psychological activities' while Blue colour affects the 'higher order psychological activities'. Yellow and Green colours affect different aspects of human emotions. Mixing these Primaries can affect combinations of psychological aspects. (B)Colours have a universal psychological effects which means the effects of colours on psychology is unaffected by any external factor. (C)Every colour according to its visible quality are divided into four groups and people are divided into four personality types. Type 1 people are warm introverts. They are more practical and colour group associated with this type is warm delicates. Type 2 people are cool introverts who are internally motivated and like to avoid limelight. The colour group associated with this type is cool delicates. Type 3 people are warm extroverts who are externally motivated and are quite rebellious. The colour group corresponding to this type is warm intense. Type 4 are cool extroverts who are natural leaders and are focused. The colour group associated with this type is cool intense.
1978	Schauss	The Physiological Effect of Colour on the	In the experiment, Schauss painted the cell of prison in a specific tone

		Suppression of Human Aggression	of pink which he named P-618. The aim was to observe the changes in the behaviour of the prisoners over a period of time. The results of the experiment showed that only 15 minutes of exposure to P-618 helped in ensuring reduced violent and aggressive behaviour
1975	Jacobs	Effects of four psychological primary colours on anxiety state.	The effects of four primary colours (red, yellow, green, blue), projected onto a large screen was investigated.Brightness and saturation levels of the colours were not controlled. It was noted that higher state-anxiety scores were associated with red and yellow than with blue and green.

8.METHODOLOGY

8.1 LOCALE OF THE STUDY

(1)Out of 75 cities of Uttar Pradesh four cities will be randomly selected.

(2)1 city from each North, South, East and West zone will be selected randomly for the present study.

8.2 SAMPLE SIZE

(1)Sample will comprise 480 people ,i.e. 240 people in experimental group and 240 people in control group.

(2)4 Banks, 4 Universities and 4 BPOs from each North, South, East and West zone's city will be selected.

(3)40 people from each bank ,i.e, 160 people from 4 banks all together will be selected .

(4)40 faculty members from each university, i.e., 160 faculty members from 4 universities all together will be selected.

(5)40 people from each BPO,i.e., 160 people from 4 BPOs all together will be selected for the present study

8.3 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Multistage random sampling will be used in the selection of sample.

Stage 1 - Four cities from four zones of Uttar Pradesh will be selected.

Stage 2 - Three professions will be selected purposively.

(1)4 Banks, 4 Universities and 4 BPOs from each North, South, East and West zone's city will be selected.

(2)20-20 people each for experimental group and control group will be selected from each bank, university and BPO

Stage 3 - Final sample will be selected after taking consent for voluntary participation for the whole intervention.

8.4CRITERIA FOR SAMPLE SELECTION

(1)Participants must be above the age of 18.

(2)Professionals who have been in their present job for at least past one year.

(3)People should not have a medical mental health history.

(4)People should not be undergoing any mental health treatment/ therapy.

(5)People who have not gone through any non-normative life events.

(6)People who will take part in the whole study will be included in the final sample.

8.5 RESEARCH TOOLS

8.5.1Tools for data collection

(1)Standardised tool will be used to collect data related to stress, anxiety and depression

(2)Self constructed tools will be used to take feedback and follow up the usage of recommended colours of clothing .

8.5.2 Informative tools

Self constructed informative tools will be used for imparting awareness among sample regarding the effect of colour of clothing on common psychological problems like stress, anxiety and depression. These will be prepared in the form of booklets/leaflets/pamphlets/posters and audio visual aids.

8.6 RESEARCH VARIABLES

(1)Independent Variables- Age, Gender, Profession, Other Demographic Background and Use of colour of clothing

(2)Dependent Variables- Stress, Anxiety and Depression

8.7 PHASES OF THE STUDY

To achieve the research objectives, the research will be conducted in the following phases.

8.7.1EXPLORATORY PHASE

The Exploratory phase is intended to identify the institutions and professionals for the study and establish rapport and familiarity with the sample. The different domains explored would be age, profession, demographic background and level of stress , anxiety and depression. The overview of the exploratory phase is given in the fig.1.

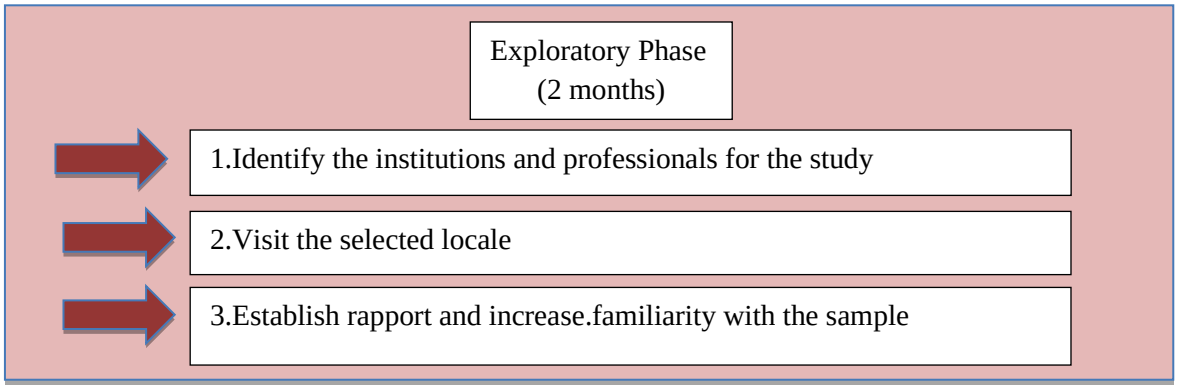
Exploratory Phase
(2 months)
1.Identify the institutions and professionals for the study
2.Visit the selected locale
3.Establish rapport and increase.familiarity with the sample

Fig.1 Exploratory phase of the research

8.7.2 PRE-INTERVENTION PHASE

In this space phase the information on colours and their effect on common psychological problems will be collected to further develop informative tools to be provided to the sample for creating awareness . The overview of the pre-intervention phase is given in the fig. 2.

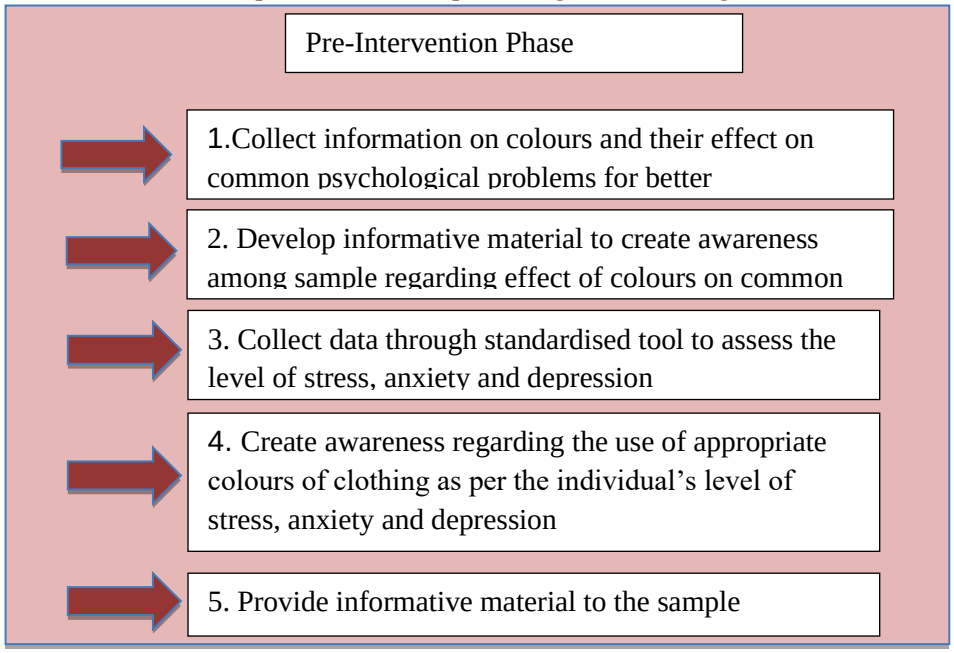
Pre-Intervention Phase
1.Collect information on colours and their effect on common psychological problems for better
2. Develop informative material to create awareness among sample regarding effect of colours on common
3. Collect data through standardised tool to assess the level of stress, anxiety and depression
4. Create awareness regarding the use of appropriate colours of clothing as per the individual's level of stress, anxiety and depression
5. Provide informative material to the sample

Fig.2 Pre-Intervention phase of the research

8.7.3 INTERVENTION PHASE

The intervention face will be an action oriented face, the duration of which is nine months. The sample will be randomly divided into two groups experimental group and control group and consent will be taken from the sample of the experimental group for voluntary participation in the intervention programme. The intervention would be oriented towards imparting knowledge regarding the use of colour of clothing and towards assessing the levels of stress, anxiety and depression of the participants. The overview of the intervention is given in the fig.3.

Table2.Groups according to level of stress and anxiety

Number of Groups	**Description**
Group S1	Low Stress
Group S2	Average Stress
Group S3	High Stress
Group A1	Low Anxiety
Group A2	Average Anxiety
Group A3	High Anxiety
Group D1	Low Depression
Group D2	Average Depression
Group D3	High Depression

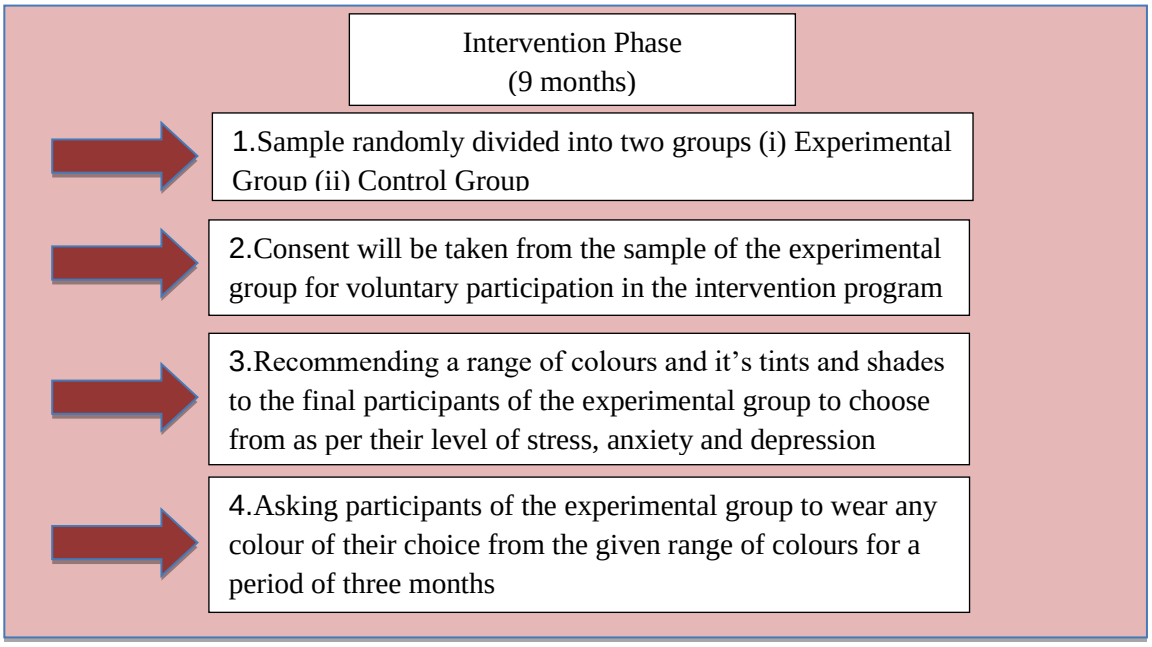
Intervention Phase
(9 months)
1.Sample randomly divided into two groups (i) Experimental Group (ii) Control Group
2.Consent will be taken from the sample of the experimental group for voluntary participation in the intervention program
3.Recommending a range of colours and it's tints and shades to the final participants of the experimental group to choose from as per their level of stress, anxiety and depression
4.Asking participants of the experimental group to wear any colour of their choice from the given range of colours for a period of three months

Fig. 3 Intervention phase of the research

8.7.4 MID-INTERVENTION PHASE

8.7.4.1 FIRST MID-INTERVENTION PHASE

This phase would be oriented towards collecting data from both the groups through a standardised questionnaire to assess any changes in the level of their stress, anxiety and depression. The over of the first mid-intervention phase is given in the fig.4

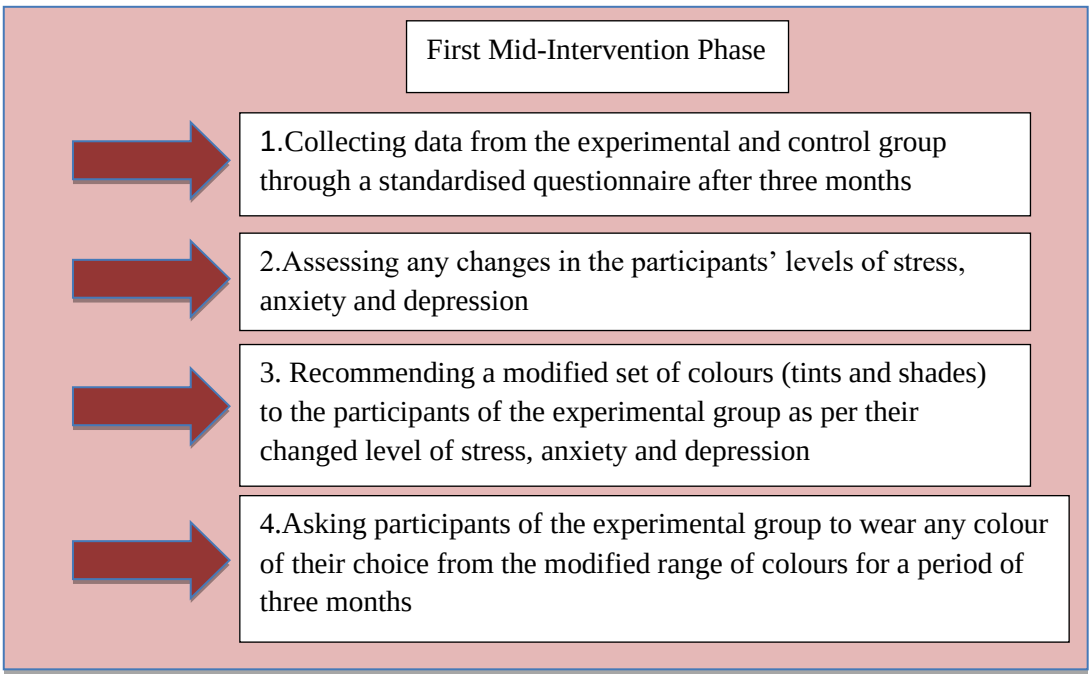
First Mid-Intervention Phase
1.Collecting data from the experimental and control group through a standardised questionnaire after three months
2.Assessing any changes in the participants' levels of stress, anxiety and depression
3. Recommending a modified set of colours (tints and shades) to the participants of the experimental group as per their changed level of stress, anxiety and depression
4.Asking participants of the experimental group to wear any colour of their choice from the modified range of colours for a period of three months

Fig.4 First Mid-Intervention phase of the research

8.7.4.2 SECOND MID-INTERVENTION PHASE

This phase would be oriented towards collecting data from both the groups through a standardised questionnaire after three months of the first mid-intervention phase to assess any changes in the level of their stress, anxiety and depression. The overview of the second mid-intervention phase is given in the fig.5

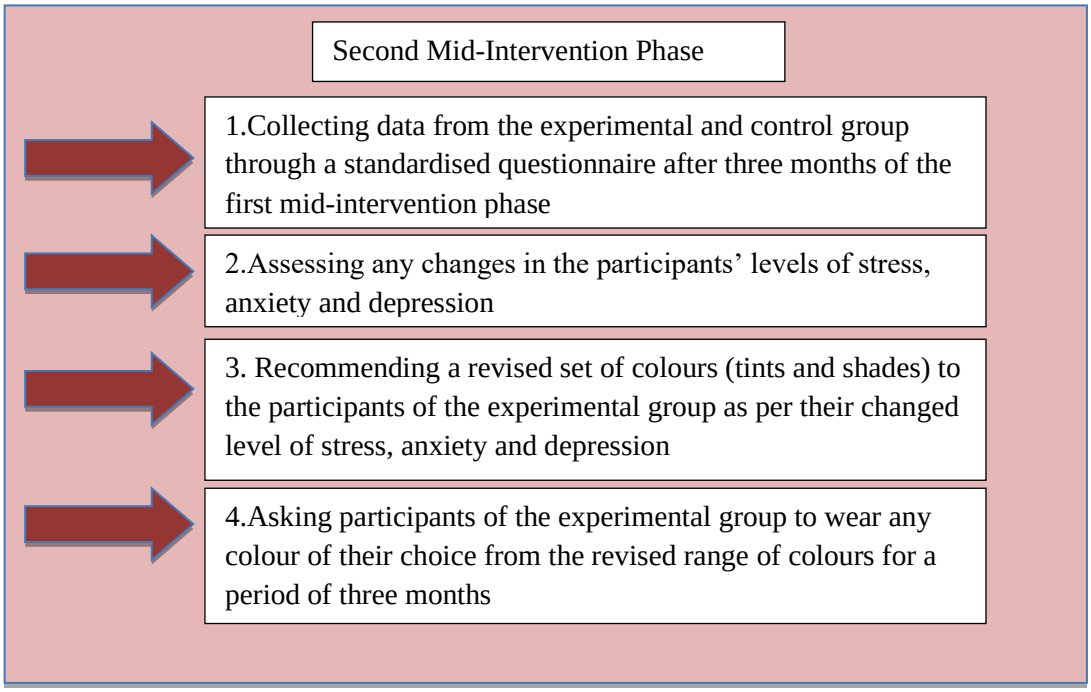
Second Mid-Intervention Phase
1.Collecting data from the experimental and control group through a standardised questionnaire after three months of the first mid-intervention phase
2.Assessing any changes in the participants' levels of stress, anxiety and depression
3. Recommending a revised set of colours (tints and shades) to the participants of the experimental group as per their changed level of stress, anxiety and depression
4.Asking participants of the experimental group to wear any colour of their choice from the revised range of colours for a period of three months

Fig. 5 Second Mid-Intervention phase of research

8.7.5 POST INTERVENTION PHASE

Evaluation of effect of intervention will be done in this phase. Feedback regarding the intervention will also be taken from the sample through self constructed tools. The overview of the post intervention phase is given in fig. 6

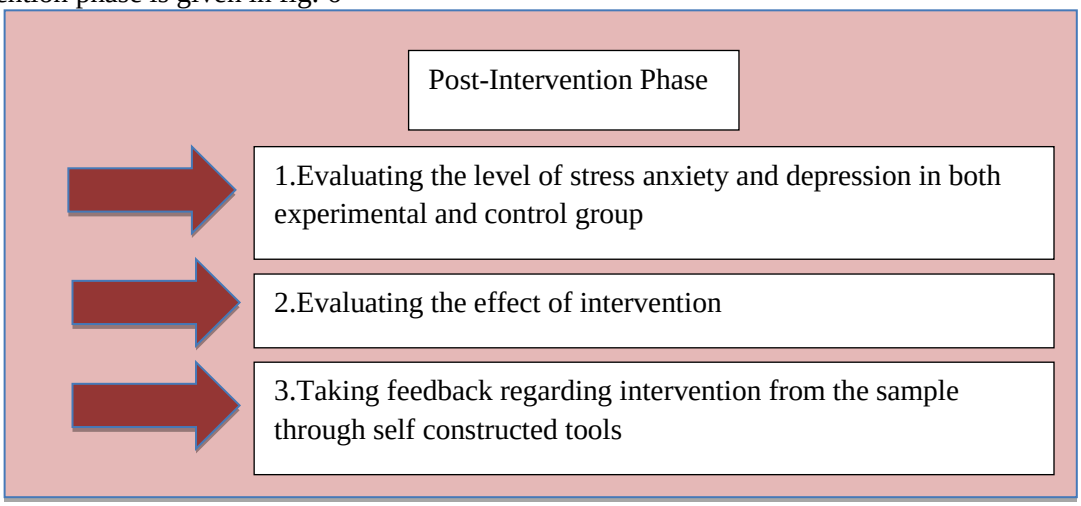
Post-Intervention Phase
1.Evaluating the level of stress anxiety and depression in both experimental and control group
2.Evaluating the effect of intervention
3.Taking feedback regarding intervention from the sample through self constructed tools

Fig. 6 Post Intervention phase of the research

8.7.6 FOLLOW-UP PHASE

Two months after the withdrawal of the intervention a follow up will be taken through a self constructed tool.

8.7.7 DISSEMINATION PHASE

Dissemination of the information for a larger public will take place in this phase. The researcher will develop leaflets/pamphlets/posters and audio visual aids for spreading awareness regarding the effect of colour of clothing on common psychological problems like stress, anxiety and depression. Along with above the researcher will also use social media platforms to circulate the information among the mass population.

8.8. STATISTICAL TOOLS TO BE USED

The information collected through research tools will be analysed and interpreted with the help of various statistical tools. The following statistical tools will be used-

(1)Mean

(2)Standard Deviation

(3)Paired t-test

(4)The following formula will be used to evaluate the effect of intervention.

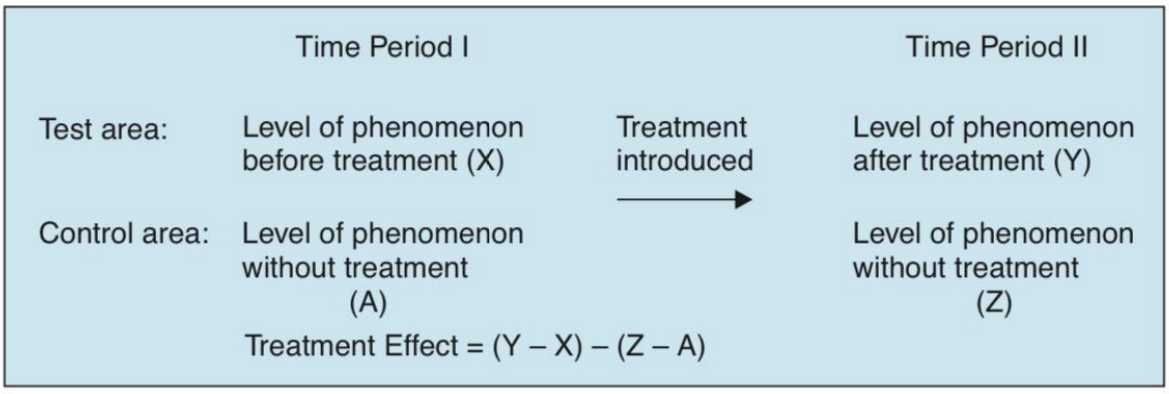
Time Period I
Time Period II
Test area:
Level of phenomenon before treatment (X)
Treatment introduced
Level of phenomenon after treatment (Y)
Control area:
Level of phenomenon without treatment (A)
Level of phenomenon without treatment (Z)
Treatment Effect = (Y – X) – (Z – A)

Fig. 7 Formula to evaluate the effect of intervention *(Source- Kothari,1990)*

9. DELIMITATIONS

(1)The study will be carried out in only four cities of Uttar Pradesh.

(2)Participants above 18 years of age will only be selected.

(3)People who will voluntarily participate in the intervention will only be selected

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